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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 7 February 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia)
(Vice-President)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1991/2; E/1991/L.10 and L.12)

BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL (E/1991/1 and Add.1; E/1991/L.11)

The PRESIDENT said that in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, he had been designated Acting President of the Council for the duration of the organizational session of 1991. In accordance with the established practice of rotation in the distribution of functions among the Vice-Presidents of the Council, it had been agreed that, in 1991, Mr. Silović (Yugoslavia) would chair the First (Economic) Committee, Mr. Somavia (Chile) the Second (Social) Committee and Mr. Eliasson (Sweden) the Third (Programme and Coordination) Committee. He himself would coordinate informal consultations and perform other tasks as required by the Council.

He drew the attention of the Council to the following communications received since the issuance of the provisional agenda: (a) the statement submitted by the Secretary-General concerning the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/1991/L.12); (b) the draft decision on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/1991/L.10); and (c) draft proposals submitted by the Acting President and members of the Bureau on the basis of informal consultations held pursuant to paragraph 2 (1) of Council resolution 1988/77 (E/1991/L.11).

He said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the provisional agenda with the additional communications to which he had just referred.

It was so decided.

Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

The PRESIDENT said that the following countries had joined the sponsors of draft decision E/1991/L.10: Bolivia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Jamaica, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, the

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Philippines, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The programme budget implications of the draft resolution were set forth in document E/1991/L.12.

Mr. BOEK (Austria), introducing the draft decision, said that it was designed to follow up a proposal contained in General Assembly resolution 45/179, which requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its thirty-fourth regular session, to consider ways and means of improving its functioning as a policy-making body and to report its recommendations to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1991. Accordingly, the Chairman and the Bureau of the Commission had sent the Secretary-General a letter in which they proposed the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs which would meet for four or five days during the Commission's thirty-fourth regular session so that the Commission could give the matter thorough consideration. During the informal consultations, the delegation of the Netherlands had submitted an amendment which had gained the support of many delegations. He requested the Secretary to read out the amendment and hoped that the Council would adopt the draft decision as amended by consensus.

Mr. STOBY (Secretary of the Council) read out the amendment proposed by the Netherlands, which would insert the following text after the phrase "first regular session of 1991," in the sixth line of draft decision E/1991/L.10: "recognizing that the mandate given by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/179 of 21 December 1990 concerning the improvement of the functioning of the Commission should be implemented forthwith".

Mr. MARTIN (United Kingdom) said that, while his delegation had expressed its support for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, it wondered about the programme budget implications of the draft decision (E/1991/L.12). He hoped that the Secretariat would be able to absorb the cost of establishing the Committee within the framework of the resources allocated for conference services.

Mr. STOBY (Secretary of the Council) said that document E/1991/L.12 contained a detailed analysis of that question and that he was unable to add anything further to what was contained in that document.

Mr. MARTIN (United Kingdom) requested that his delegation's views should be communicated to those who were responsible for taking a decision on the issue.

The PRESIDENT said he would see that that was done.

Mr. WOLFF (Observer for Colombia) said that he had not had an opportunity to examine the statement of programme budget implications in detail, but that he hoped the decision to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole would not be hindered by financial considerations and that the decision makers would give proper priority to the issue while taking due account of the comments of the United Kingdom representative.

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision as orally revised.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT recalled that in its resolution 1988/77, the Council had mandated the President of the Council, in cooperation with other members of the Bureau, to arrange consultations on the draft programme of work, the provisional agenda and other matters before the Council at its organizational session prior to the commencement of that session. Since the Council's first meeting, four informal meetings of the Council had been held, as well as a series of bilateral consultations with representatives of groups and members of the Council who were not included in any group. He invited the Council to consider, one by one, the draft decisions submitted by the Acting President and members of the Bureau on the basis of the informal consultations (E/1991/L.11).

Draft decision I

Section A

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt section A of draft decision I.

It was so decided.

Sections B and C

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt sections B and C of draft decision I.

It was so decided.

Sections D and E

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt sections D and E of draft decision I.

It was so decided.

Section F

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt section F of draft decision I.

It was so decided.

Section G

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt section G of draft decision I.

It was so decided.

Draft decision II

Mr. MISSARY (Observer for Yemen) noted that draft decision II on the list of questions for inclusion in the programme of work for 1992 provided for only oral reports on programmes of economic and humanitarian assistance. He asked whether written reports could be submitted for all countries receiving aid under special programmes of economic and humanitarian assistance so that the information could be received and properly examined by the countries in question.

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had taken due note of the previous speaker's comments. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision II.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision III.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision IV.

It was so decided.

Draft decision V

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision V.

It was so decided.

Draft decision VI

The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the proposed dates of the resumed first regular session, which should read from 17 to 21 June. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision VI.

It was so decided.

Draft decision VII

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision VII.

It was so decided.

Draft decision VIII

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft decision VIII.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that, in view of the decision just taken to consider the item entitled "Narcotic drugs" at a resumed first regular session of the Council, the duration of the session would be shortened. He proposed that the first regular session should begin on 13 May instead of 7 May, as had originally been scheduled. That would have the added advantage of making the documentation for the first session available in good time and prevent any overlap with the end of the thirty-fourth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which was currently scheduled to be held from 29 April to 9 May. He therefore suggested that the Council should adopt the following decision: "The Council decides that its first regular session of 1991, which was scheduled to be held from 7 to 31 May 1991, will be held from 13 to 31 May 1991". If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt that decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that during informal consultations it had been agreed that it might be necessary to hold a resumed organizational session of the Council within the next few weeks so that the Council could consider in an appropriate manner aspects or implications of the war in the Gulf which might fall within its mandate, if the members of the Council so decided. It had also been agreed that informal consultations would be held in the interim to deal with that question.

Mr. Al-TAIHANI (Bahrain) said that the possible resumption of the organizational session did not mean that there was a consensus on the items to be dealt with at that time and that the session could be held only with the agreement of the members of the Council. The question of the Gulf should be considered in accordance with the relevant guidelines laid down by the Security Council and, in particular, the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990).

The PRESIDENT said that the measures to be taken in that area would be in accordance with what would be decided upon by the members of the Council and that the Council would not infringe upon the mandates of other bodies, such as the Security Council. There would be no resumed organizational session unless all the members of the Council decided to hold such a session and, for that reason, the Council would hold informal consultations on the question.

He said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council agreed to follow that procedure.

It was so decided.

ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE COUNCIL AND CONFIRMATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE FUNCTIONAL COMMISSIONS (E/1991/10/Rev.1; E/1991/L.2, L.3, L.4; A/45/3/Add.1)

Committee on Natural Resources

The PRESIDENT said that the elections postponed from previous sessions were listed in the agenda (E/1991/2). With regard to the Committee on Natural Resources, the Secretariat had been informed by the Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States that the candidacy of Romania had been endorsed to fill the vacancy for that Group for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1994. In the absence of other candidates, he would take it that the Council wished to elect Romania by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had been informed by the secretariat of OAU, on behalf of the Group of African States, that the candidacies of Egypt and Gabon had been endorsed to fill the vacancies for that Group for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1993.

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In the absence of other candidates, he would take it that the Council wished to elect Egypt and Gabon members of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that with regard to the remaining vacancies in subsidiary bodies of the Council for which elections had been postponed from previous sessions, the Secretariat had not been notified of any candidacies by the Chairmen of the regional groups or the secretariat of OAU on behalf of the Group of African States. In the absence of candidatures to fill those vacancies, he suggested that the elections to fill those vacancies should be postponed to a future session.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT drew the attention of the Council to document E/1991/10/Rev.1, containing the names of the representatives of the members of the functional commissions which had been submitted for confirmation by the Council since the close of the organizational session for 1990. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to confirm those nominations.

It was so decided.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF 1991 AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1991/L.13)

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to approve the provisional agenda for the first regular session of 1991 as contained in document E/1991/L.13.

It was so decided.

Mr. KUFOUR (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, once again drew the attention of the Secretariat to the need to ensure strict observance of the deadline of six weeks before the beginning of a session for the publication of documentation so that delegations had time to consider the various sessional documents. In that regard, he requested the Secretariat to submit a report on the status of the documentation and to take speedy measures so that the Council could consider the report of the South Commission and the proposal by the Group of 77 to invite the Chairmen of the Commission and ensure full participation by the specialized agencies. The Group of 77 wholeheartedly supported the decision set forth in document E/1991/L.10 and expressed satisfaction at the constructive attitude which had characterized the informal consultations.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.